EXTRACTS, &c.

EXTRACTS

FROM

LETTERS

WRITTEN

DURING A FIRST YEAR'S RESIDENCE

IN THE

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS

OF

LOWER CANADA.

LONDON:

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EXTRACTS, &c.

June 8th 1836.

Ship A——, lat. 39° 15′ N. long. 51° 46′ W.

My dearest Mother:

As we are approaching the conclusion of our voyage, I shall prepare a letter for you to send from New York immediately on my arrival. Of course, you cannot expect that the monotony of a voyage across the Atlantic can possibly afford much material for correspondence, but you will be content this time to hear of my safe arrival, without expecting a long letter. We have had a most unlooked-for succession of fair winds from the eastward, so that we have every prospect of a short passage, although the ship sails very badly. The weather has not been altogether summer, but at times boisterous with much rain, and two or three days lately very cold, so that I have been glad to wear my rough coat all day; to-day and yesterday are, however, beautiful days, the water bright and smooth, and the sun shining in meridian splendour. I have been happy in having a most comfortable cabin, having

been able to keep my window open constantly, and a good light from above as well, so that, with my secretary set up and my books at hand, I have been quite cosey. I have nevertheless felt the want of society on board, not having one person with whom I can converse with pleasure. The captain is a very illiterate man, just capable of taking a ship from one port to another, and nothing more; my fellow-passengers, one a lieutenant in the —— regiment, by no means a congenial companion, and a young lady of about eighteen years of age, going out to her sister, a complete boarding-school miss, and I should judge very badly brought up at home. We have about one hundred and fifty second-cabin and steerage passengers, including a few respectable tradesmen; the agriculturists are a very inferior set, not one among whom I should be anxious to engage as an assistant.

We had yesterday a very remarkable instance of the interposition of Providence making us the means of rescuing seventy individuals from a lingering death. It had been calm all the morning till noon, when a breeze sprung up from the westward, which threw us out of our course, and about two o'clock P.M. fell in with a brig, who sent a boat on board of us; she proved to be the Henry of Cork, bound to St. John's, with sixty-four passengers, emigrants. She had been out fifty-three days, and was in great distress for provisions, having been reduced for the last six days to half a biscuit a day, many of the passengers not having even that. We supplied her with two casks of beef and pork, five hundred-weight of bread, tea, spirits, &c., besides many of our passengers giving what they

could spare from their stock. The vessel herself was a wretched brig of 130 tons, ill found in everything and leaky; and the competency of the master to his charge may be judged, when I tell you that he was 800 miles (by his reckoning) to the westward of his actual situation. The agents and owners were Messrs. ——— of Cork; and as such culpable neglect and barbarity on their part should not be concealed, I think you would be conferring a favour on society if you threw this account into form and sent it to the Morning Herald. The place where we fell in with the brig was lat. 40 N. long. 51° 20′ W., and the day the 7th of June. The most remarkable features of this case were, that had we not been thrown as we were out of our course, she would not have fallen in with us; and if she had missed us there was little probability of her falling in with another vessel, certainly not with one who could have supplied her wants.

It is disgraceful to the persons connected with our ship, that one hundred and sixty beings were embarked without a surgeon, although she was advertized to carry one. We have, providentially, had no accidents, nor any very serious illness; and in the attendance that was requisite I have assisted the captain, who is very humane to them; but his medicine chest exhibits a fresh instance of the roguery connected with this traffic in human flesh, as it is filled with abundance of the most expensive and least useful drugs, while the more necessary ones are omitted.

New York, June 24.

We are at last arrived at this place after a longer passage than we expected, being thirty-four days, but

after all by no means a long one. We arrived at the Quarantine ground the day before yesterday, but did not get clear of the ship till last night; and I am going to start by the steamer for Albany at five this afternoon. I can tell you very little, of course, of this city, though I must say I am disappointed in the general appearance of it, and very much inclined to be confirmed in my bad opinion of the American character, having hitherto met with nothing but gross and unprovoked insult, extortion, and injustice from them; indeed an opportunity appears to be never lost by an American to manifest his dislike to all other nations, more particularly the English. I shall write to you again on my arrival at Lennoxville. I have found my baggage rather cumbersome to move, but by no means impossible, though I dare say it will increase my travelling expenses; but as it is only one journey, that does not signify. I shall now conclude this letter, which, notwithstanding my threat in the commencement, is I think sufficiently long. &c. &c.

Lennoxville, Ascot, July 10*th* 1836.

My dearest Mother:

You have, of course, received from me the letter which I wrote on my arrival at New York. I proceeded immediately to Montreal, where I experienced the greatest kindness from Mr. McGill, on whom I had my letters of credit. I remained there from Wednesday till Saturday, although I had intended

setting out for the townships on Friday, but remained, in consequence of Mr. McGill's wishing me to meet Lord Gosford at dinner, at his house, on Friday, after which I was to go down on Saturday in company with Mr. Moffat, one of the Commissioners of the Land Company.

Lord Gosford showed me particular attention, asking me to take wine at dinner, and coming to talk with me afterwards. His interest is, however, to me of no value, because even if I could, I would never accept any public situation in the distracted state of politics in this country. The only thing for a man to do here is, to set himself down on his acres, and keep himself perfectly free from politics. The country (*i. e.* the Eastern Townships) answers my warmest expectations; it is beautiful as scenery, and the soil good, particularly for grazing: the wheat is not raised in such large crops as in the Upper Provinces, seldom exceeding twenty-five bushels per acre.

I have just purchased my farm, which is everything I could wish, after travelling round in all directions, and examining every part. I shall be very busy, having a very large hay harvest, nearly fifty acres, to get in. The weather has been intensely hot here. Yesterday, the thermometer stood at 90° in the shade, and I was obliged to ride thirty-five miles in the heat of the day, besides walking about my farm. I shall not get into my house for six weeks, but I put my man and his wife in the day after to-morrow, and lodge at a neighbour's till my house is ready. I must acknowledge that when I was first set down in this place, I was for a little time exceedingly melancholy; but time

and the necessity for active exertion, and above all, the being enabled, as I trust I do, to look constantly upwards for assistance, has enabled me to overcome it. &c. &c.

To J—— B——, Esq.

Lennoxville, July 10*th* 1836.

My dear Sir:

I will endeavour to fulfil my promise of writing to you on my arrival here, though I cannot have much to tell you, further than that the place of my future abode is fixed. I have purchased a place called Lowd Farm, situated in the township of Eaton, fifteen miles from Lennoxville, five from the village of Eaton Corner, and a short two from Cookshire Church and village. It is a beautiful spot, with a fine extensive view, and the land very good; the extent two hundred acres, of which eighty-five are in a state of improvement, with a house, barns, &c. The price I gave was £250 currency; the contract with the carpenter for repairing the house, barns, &c., is £55 more, and £50 will go in stocking it, so that for £350 currency I have become a landholder, freeholder, and in fact an independent man.

This country has been by no means misrepresented; it affords every inducement to settlers. The land is good, particularly for grazing; the climate delightful; and above all, there is a ready market for every species of grain or stock you can raise, and cash paid for it. The original American settlers, who form the bulk of the population, are always ready to sell their improved

farms at fair prices and to go further into the bush. The only thing which is high here is the labour: this will, of course, fall as the population increases.

I have been very fortunate in servants, having met with a man and his wife, with a five years' high character from their last place, just arrived from England I have engaged the man as farm servant, and the woman as housekeeper, at £3 currency per month. I have another man or lad as teamster at the same wages, who only however remains with me during the busy months. My stock this winter will consist of three horses, two cows, one pair of oxen, and small animals (*i.e.* pigs, &c.) in proportion: another year I shall be able to increase, but I was rather late this year. Cattle meet a very good sale and a constant demand, as the Boston, Quebec, and Montreal markets are all supplied from this country.

To E. S——, Esq.

Cookshire, July 17th 1836.

My dear Brother:

Notwithstanding my having despatched letters the other day to various members of the family, I will fulfil my promise of giving you a separate one. Since writing those, I have shifted my abode and commenced work, which at present has consisted in drawing and piling old logs ready for burning, and also in ploughing. Of the latter I have a good deal to do, which I have every prospect of doing well, as I have succeeded in obtaining a very good plough, between the old one

of the country and the Scotch plough, which latter is beginning to be introduced. I have bought a four-year-old colt very cheap for my own riding and waggon, and as I have a large crop of hay, I shall add to my present stock two or three horned animals for winter feeding. We live at present on salt provisions. I am living at a farm-house about a mile from my farm till my own is put to rights; or fixed, as the Yankees would say.

My system is this: I rise at five o'clock, have my basin of bread and milk, and walk to my work. In the middle of the day, while the men and cattle are feeding, I do some little carpentering job. We work till half-past seven or eight, when I walk home and have my supper, generally consisting of a small piece of fried bacon, two eggs, and from six to eight cups of tea. I find this system enables me to endure much harder labour than if I fed in the day, and my health, thank God, is excellent. I am going with my waggon to-morrow seven miles to the mill, to fetch my grist.

This country has not been at all misrepresented: to the man of small capital it is perfectly suited. I find sheep will answer well, as there is a constant demand for wool; but they are not generally kept as yet. The first settlers have no idea of doing more than support themselves, and are much attached to what they call trading, which consists in bartering cattle, &c., whenever they can gain half a dollar by the exchange. I am happy to say I have not found myself at a loss in my new situation; from the moment I entered the country, I had my eyes, ears, and mouth open, and from the little knowledge I really possessed,

being careful never to allow the smallness of the stock to appear, I rapidly acquired a perfect acquaintance with the prices, &c. The only thing for a man to do here is to throw aside all affectation of superiority, and meet the Yankee on his own grounds; you will then find them an honest, fair, though hard-dealing set of men. I only know that, by adopting this plan, I have met with no difficulty; and I may safely say that I have not, in one single instance, been taken in.

All the old settlers, particularly round me, are Yankees; but they are fast retiring before the tide of emigration, the more sagacious among them predicting the total ruin of the country from this irruption on their old haunts and habits. A few men of the same, or less means than myself, coming here would buy them out and make a delightful neighbourhood. I could answer to show them next year several farms near my own, all eligible. My constant employment prevents me from feeling the loneliness of my situation in this country, but when unoccupied and quiet I must say I do feel it much. I was quite overpowered in church to-day by one of the old Heathfield tunes being sung; a tide of recollections rushed over me, which brought tears into my eyes that I was with difficulty enabled to suppress.

Remember always, my dear brother and sister, that the same gracious God who watches over and has hitherto so mercifully preserved me, watches over both of you, and that thought alone will bring us together, though separated by thousands of miles. There is our true point of union, through Christ Jesus our common Saviour.

Woodcote Place, Oct. 18*th* 1836.

My dear Brother.

I have this evening received your welcome letter, for which accept my best thanks, and which was the more welcome as I had been for some time expecting intelligence of the family, and having had none, had become rather anxious.

You cannot well conceive the solitariness of my situation: it is not actual loneliness, for I have three besides myself in my family, and several neighbours, but it is the want of some one to whom to communicate my idea.. You will understand this when I tell you that I have not a single educated individual within fifteen miles, and at that distance, from the necessity of constant attention to home affairs, we seldom meet.

I gave you general information in my last respecting my estate, to which, as you see, I have given the euphonious appellation of Woodcote Place, and I will now enter more into details.

My land is of an oblong square shape, lying lengthways north and south, containing a superficial surface of 200 acres. Half of this (the northern half) is clothed with its original forest garb, containing every description of tree; the other half is clear, and almost entirely free from stumps; the whole lies with a gentle inclination to south-west. About the centre of the cleared half, and inclining to the western boundary, stands the dwelling, one of those perfections of comfortable cottages which I have often pictured to myself in my waking dreams, with a verandah open to a garden in front. It contains on the ground-floor a good sitting-room, my bed-room, which is convertible

into a dining-room if requisite, a large kitchen with a lobby leading to a spacious back kitchen or wash-house, dairy and entrance-hall. Upstairs are four good bed-rooms, accessible by front and back stairs, and a linen-closet. It is, in fact, as comfortable a residence for a small family of simple manners and habits as could be wished for. I am now seated, the domestics having retired to bed, at a round birch-wood table before a comfortable wood fire, with my library and everything around me, with slippered feet, after a pretty good day's work, performed under the additional comfort of a fall of snow, having been chopping out roads through the woods, for the purpose of drawing out fencing timber on the snow in the winter. But this is a digression from my description.

About a hundred yards eastward of the house, which, by the bye, has an out-building attached, divided into wood-house and carriage-house, stand the farm buildings, consisting of two large barns, stables, and cattle-shed, forming a square which encloses the straw-yard. The supply of water is excellent, having a beautiful spring, which is brought through hollow logs buried in the earth directly into the wash-house, from whence it runs off and supplies two drinking places for the cattle, so that we have a constant supply of pure water in the house; another spring runs in a similar manner into the barn-yard. Both these affairs are my contrivance and execution.

I have as housekeeper a most delightful old Scotch-woman, the widow of a farmer, who died here after being in the country ten or twelve years. My *factotum* is an Englishman named Bates, coming from near

Maidstone; and I have also his brother, a lad of fifteen, as an assistant. Their wages are as follows: The housekeeper six dollars, Bates ten, and John five dollars per month. The only thing dear in this country is wages, so that you are obliged to avoid hiring as much as possible. My stock consists of a most superior short-horned Durham bull and heifer, three cows, one pair of oxen, two working mares, and one for my own use, and a foal. I have two dogs, both presents; one a black cur-dog, for the cattle, and a beautiful spaniel of the Devonshire breed.

Game of all kinds is plentiful, but I have positively scarcely fired my gun. During my late absence at Montreal, where I had been to purchase necessaries for my house furnishing, Bates shot a deer close before the house, and my housekeeper reported the venison excellent, of which I was compelled to form an opinion by hearsay, as it was all eaten up before my return. We get to Montreal with ease in three days, by a stage, which runs from Sherbrooke (twenty miles hence) to Port St. Francis, and from thence by steamer to Montreal.

Looking back upon the active life I have quitted, it sometimes seems quite a dream, being transported in so short a time into such complete retirement; but you must not think from the first part of my letter that I am unhappy, or repent the step I have taken; this is not the case: I certainly never enjoy a great elevation of spirits, but I am calm and contented, and every day feel more deeply convinced that everything in my lot has been ordered for the best by the overruling Providence of a good God. I have established the regular

performance of family worship in my little circle, and I now wonder how any master of a family can ever neglect so great a privilege. May I ever be enabled to appreciate and value it as I do at p. esent!

Thanks to your kind assistance, everything I have is of the greatest use. I shall feel obliged by your seeing that my subscription to the Tract Society is paid at Christmas, and if they like to send me some tracts, I have a field for distributing them. I shall now conclude this long letter.

Woodcote Place, Nov. 3d, 1836.

My dearest Mother:

I was much gratified yesterday by the receipt of your long and delightful letter. I was rather surprised at your desiring me so seriously to read your letters twice, as if they were not read and re-read at least a dozen times. You can scarcely conceive the anxiety with which letters are expected by a person cut off from all friends, and the extreme pleasure which they give. I have already given you an account of my location; this therefore I shall not repeat, but confine myself more to my manner of living, the views I have formed, and my general opinion of the country.

I must in the first place endeavour, with all due submission, to set you right in an error into which you have fallen with respect to this country. You must recollect that this is not America, but a colony of Great Britain, with whose interests she is as clearly and as intimately connected as with any part of the

mother country itself. You do not, I think, either rightly understand my political principles, which are those of a high tory of the old school. I have indeed, and always had, a most strong feeling of devotion to the constitution of my country, more particularly that part which affects the royal prerogative, and which I should be always ready, when I was not forbidden by Christian principles, to defend at the hazard of my life. These two points being clearly understood, you will see that, although I do not actively interfere in politics, I can still feel warmly interested in the welfare of the country which supports me. By not interfering in politics, I mean the elections and political discussions, always engendering a spirit which, to say the least of it, is decidedly opposed to that inculcated by our Great Master and pattern.

This country is in a miserably divided state just now, owing to the agitations and cabals of a few democratic gentlemen, a few degrees worse than our friend Dan O'C., inasmuch as they are diametrically opposed to every scheme for the settlement and improvement of the country. One of their demands in their last address to the governor, was the repeal of an Act of Parliament granting a charter to the British American Land Company, who are carrying on most extensive operations in the townships, and in this year have imported and settled a great number of British emigrants. This has alarmed the bigotted French party, who are strongly opposed to the introduction of British enterprize and industry among them, with which they cannot compete, and under which they must eventually succumb. Seeing this they are ready, as

all democrats and radicals are, to sacrifice the best interests of their country to further their own private ends. The lower orders of the French population are a quiet well-disposed race, completely deceived and misled by their radical representatives.

Having thus disposed of the subject of Canadian politics, I shall turn to the more agreeable one of Canadian farming. I feel confident that no pursuit or employment ever suited me better than my present one. I was always partial to bodily exertion and out-door employments, of which I have now plenty; and there is something in the healthful, interesting, and innocent employments of a farmer's life, which exactly suits my present feelings.

I will now give you a sketch of a day. I rise at this time of year about half-past six or seven, and have sundry small occupations till eight. At that hour our little household assembles for family prayer, and I know not when I feel a greater or sweeter pleasure than when we unite at these seasons in imploring the pardon, and commending ourselves to the protection of our Heavenly Father. Our breakfast follows; immediately after which we go out to our active employments, and my worthy old housekeeper to her domestic duties.

You enquire after my man and his wife. I thought I had informed you of her melancholy and sudden decease shortly after coming to me: the man Bates continues with me, and is, I may safely say, every thing I could wish. His brother John is a nice lad of fifteen, and these two, with Mrs. B., compose my family. The

latter is the widow of a Scotch farmer, who died some time since, having been about ten years in the country, so that she is fully initiated into the ways. She is exceedingly economical, and a most perfect mistress of every part of her duty, quiet, cheerful, and respectful; in fact I cannot say too much for her.

But to return to our day. At twelve we come in, when they have their dinner; my repast consisting of a little bread and cheese, or something similar, my system being only two meals a day, and those in the morning and in the evening. In the afternoon to work again till about five; then foddering and attending the cattle, horses, &c. occupies till six, when it is dark. I then have my last meal, which is a species of solid tea, and at eight we again assemble to our family devotions, when they go to bed; and this is my hour for reading, &c., which I do by the light of home-made candles. And you may now have some idea of the feeling of independence of a man possessed of a comfortable house, buildings, &c., with two hundred acres of good land, free from rent, taxes, or any incumbrance, save twelve days' statute duty on the roads. My dwelling is the beau idéal of the height of my ambition: a comfortable cottage prettily situated. I know not where you can enjoy a more pleasing view of a fine sunset than from my verandah, nor listen on a brilliant moonlight night with more advantage to the soothing sound of a waterfall in the neighbouring river. This is a beautiful country for grazing, to which I intend chiefly to turn my attention: it also produces wheat and other grain in sufficient abun-

dance, and with less tillage than is necessary in England, and we have a ready market at our doors for any produce we can raise.

Woodcote Place, Dec. 3d, 1836.

My dear Aunt:

I sit down with pleasure, after a hard day's labour, to talk to you a little, supposing myself, notwithstanding the snow falling without, seated in a snug corner of your hospitable fireside. I am just now busily occupied in getting in my firewood, and as it is always best to have at least six months' wood beforehand, this is a great undertaking the first time. The woods we use for fires are maple, beech, and birch. That which I am now getting in is off a neighbour's lot, consisting of a number of trees blown down some years ago, which he is much obliged to me for taking away. Being dry it makes most excellent firewood, so that the obligation is mutual.

The people settled here, all Yankees, are a singular contradiction of character. The fact of their coming and settling down in the midst of the forest, certainly argues a people of an active enterprising spirit, but their general mode of conduct is exactly the reverse. Their farming is carried on in a most slovenly manner: the filth of their stables and farm buildings would disgrace a Hottentot, and they are always behindhand. Of course, as I am desirous of ingratiating myself with these people, I am sparing of my observations, but

I am endeavouring to shew by my example what can be done with proper diligence and attention. The truth is, that they only work in seed and harvest time, whereas my maxim is to be always doing something every day, the only way of keeping things in order.

I have broken up this summer and fall fifteen or sixteen acres of old pasture land, which is destined for my wheat, oats, and potatoes, next spring. Having made myself master of the theory of ploughing from books, I soon learnt the practical part of holding the plough, and I believe can flatter myself there are few sixteen acres around me so well tilled. The goodness of God has preserved me in perfect health and strength. Of my spirits I can say but little, for it could hardly be expected that they would be very high or buoyant, cut off as I am from all my dearest connexions, and literally deprived of intercourse with a single educated being. I have positively no person whom I could designate with the title even of companion within fifteen miles, and that is a distance which, of course, precludes any frequent meeting. I shall doubtless have some English neighbours next spring. I am a short two miles from the church, which is a great comfort, as I can always get there, though not without difficulty at this time of year, as we have a river to cross which has no bridge, and has been just now in a state between water and ice; not hard enough to bear, but sufficiently so to make it difficult for a horse to break through. Our roads in these townships are excellent: there has been no time this fall when you could not travel with a wheel-carriage of the lightest construction.

Winter is just now setting in. The day before yesterday the thermometer was 5° below zero, and I was chopping all day with my coat off, and too warm then; actually presenting the singular appearance of the perspiration freezing on my face. I have a thermometer at my door, and keep a regular meteorological journal.

Dec. 28th 1836.

My dearest Mother:

I am now dating my letter from the midst of a Canadian winter, but am not yet frozen, nor by all appearances likely to be so.

The climate here has not hitherto been that settled severe winter that I was led to expect, but, on the contrary, variable. We have had some very severe stormy days, some sharp frosts, and a small proportion of snow. The thermometer, at seven o'clock this morning, stood at 28° below zero, which is the lowest it has hitherto been.

The roads are now covered with a good solid coat of frozen snow, and the sleighing in consequence is good. and the bridgeless river which runs between me and the church and village, and which has been a source of constant trouble this fall, is completely frozen up, so that I now exultingly drive over my old enemy's back, through whose stream I was formerly obliged to wade. I however sustained a ducking while walking to church one Sunday, having fallen through the ice before it was sufficiently strong. You would have been

inclined to laugh to have seen me on a rather cold frosty day, standing in a hole in the ice up to my middle in water, and my old lady on the bank, much in the situation of a hen, whose brood of ducklings have made their first essay on their native element.

Notwithstanding the cessation from all ordinary farm labour, I have still plenty of work on my hands, such as getting in firewood, cutting cedar rails, and cutting and drawing logs to the mill. I am become an expert chopper, not fearing to engage a tree of any dimensions. Were I turned loose in your grove, it is astonishing the execution I should make. It is surprising the ease with which a large tree is felled when the knack is acquired. The firewood consists of trees and their limbs cut in lengths of about twelve feet, and drawn home on a sled, of which there are two kinds, the larger drawn by oxen, the smaller by horses: it is then cut short and split for the stoves, &c. The cedar rails are the white cedar, which grows in abundance, felled, cut into lengths of thirteen feet, and split, to any dimensions required, with axe and wedge. This is a pretty operation, requiring some judgment. These rails form our only fences here.

The last kind of labour in which I am engaged is logging, and this is the most fascinating of all. The logs I am now cutting are hemlock and spruce, to be sawn into planks and boards in the spring, for stable-boards, fences, &c., the former of large dimensions, two and a-half and three and a-half feet in diameter. These are cut into lengths of twelve or fourteen feet, all with the axe, and then drawn on sleds to the saw-mill. All this, as you may imagine, is no boy's play,

what with chopping, heaving, lifting, &c., but it is a most healthful and delightful occupation for the winter. I can assure you I have not been in-doors one day, not even the severest, and have been always quite warm.

I am extremely moderate, even sparing in my diet, which I find agrees better with me, and have not had an hour's illness since I have been here, with the exception of a headache the other day, which I could attribute to no other cause than cold, and which soon left me. I should enjoy much giving you a whisk in a sleigh: a species of travelling which I am sure you would admire, something between gliding and flying.

Dec. 31*st.*

The severe frost still continues. When I examined the thermometer this morning, I found that the mercury had retired altogether into the bulb of my thermometer, which is graduated to 32° below zero, so you may form some idea of the frost. A boiler standing on the cooking-stove in the kitchen actually froze in the morning, though some fire still remained in the stove; yet from all this we feel no real inconvenience. Indeed I never feel the cold except just at rising in the morning; and it is one of the many instances of the goodness of Providence, which a reflecting mind will not fail to observe, that when the temperature is so very low, the air is always perfectly still. Were it otherwise it would be impossible to expose yourself to it. I was in the woods with my man and team all this forenoon, logging.

Jan. 10*th* 1837.

After ample opportunities of judging, I give it as my decided opinion, in common with other English settled here, that a man with little capital does far better by settling on an improved farm than on wild land, where he will exhaust all his means before he can have any return. It is impossible for an Englishman, unaccustomed to the work, to clear land properly: he must hire out his work, and it will then be badly done. With the experience I now have, I could set to work to clear if necessary, but a man coming fresh to it looks with despair at the large trees, which he conceives it impossible to fell with an axe. I say this from cases which I actually witness. With regard to the common notion, which every man comes to this country with his head full of, that all improved farms are exhausted, it is utterly erroneous; they are far too slovenly and careless farmers to exhaust the land when they have been on it ever so long. The tillage given is so little that the surface is merely scratched, and the first proper ploughing brings a fresh soil into action. Mine is considered on all hands the finest farm in the township, and it is one of those which have been slovenly managed.

You made me smile when you spoke of dreary days and in-door employments. I have not been one day in-doors this winter, and we have had as severe weather as we can have, 32° below zero. The snow, from the great cold, is so dry, that you may be up to your middle in it all day without inconvenience. If it is very severe we work in the woods, where indeed our work principally lies, and where the climate is

quite different, being sheltered and warm. With respect to my clothing, I find the woollen shirts invaluable, and lamb's-wool socks not-to-be-done-without-able, muffetees delectable, and leather leggings or spats to keep the snow out of your trowsers most desirable; these I wear with Indian mocassins, which are the only wearable things in winter, as thick boots or shoes get frozen so hard, that your feet having no power to move, become benumbed and liable to be frozen, whereas the pliability of the mocassin keeps the feet constantly warm and comfortable.

I should tell you there are mills in progress close to me on the river, which will be a great convenience to me and double the value of my property: they will be going next fall. I have still a great deal of work on hand, getting out 2,000 rails, making gates and pointing stakes, framing a cart-lodge, so that we have few idle days; but I must say I find the evenings dreadfully dull. I however employ them much in reading, and in making a series of etchings of my Canadian occupations; and on a Sunday evening it is a great pleasure to me to sing to myself some of our favourite hymns, and imagine that, at the same time, those who are so dear to me are doing the same.

March 4th 1837.

My dear Brother:

The weather now begins to be fine, and the sun is getting great power in the middle of the day. The grand season of deer-hunting is about commencing, as

the snow will soon have a hard crust, which will bear a man on snow-shoes, but through which a deer or moose will break, consequently they are soon overtaken and killed. I have been exercising on snow-shoes to day and shall soon be able to run in style. You will find a pretty accurate description of this sport in Virgil's Georgics.

With respect to the questions you asked respecting implements, &c., there are few agricultural implements used in England which cannot be used here; but the things which require most improvement is the neat stock and sheep. Threshing machines are not required, as the winter is so long your man would have nothing to do were it not for threshing. Besides, grain will never be the staple produce of this country; it must depend more on its advantages for grazing.

Never allow any friend, of whose intended emigration you may be aware, to do so in a state of single blessedness; we bachelors are in this country truly objects of pity and commiseration.

With respect to roads, I can tell you that in winter they are of course good, being, when the sleighing is good, literally rail-roads. In the summer-time, although not exactly like the great North Road, they are yet passable; the road between Eaton and Lennoxville being, last summer, never so bad but that I could drive at the rate of six miles an hour. They will of course be better as the country becomes better settled; when magistrates are established and the people compelled to perform their statute labour.

You will be glad to hear the brewery succeeds well, and that beer bids fair shortly to supersede almost

entirely the whiskey and other abominable compounds. Mr. A's custom is so great that he can hardly brew fast enough, and I think, and so does he, that there would soon be an opening for another in the southern section of the county.

March 20th 1837.

My next subject is the moose hunt, which is an affair of more recent occurrence. At this time of year when the snow is very deep, the surface by the occasional short thaws becomes melted, which freezing again forms a hard crust, which will bear the weight of a dog, or a man on snow-shoes, but breaks with the hoofs of the deer and moose, which in consequence are not able to run any great distance. Their instinct teaches them in the winter to form what are called "deer or moose yards, according as they are inhabited by the one or the other, for they never mix together. These are formed by a small number congregating together and beating tracks in the snow, crossing each other over a space of from five to ten acres, where they browse on the spray and bark of the young trees. When one of these yards is discovered by the hunter, he looks round until he finds out the fresh track where the animals have just started out, alarmed by the invasion of their retreat: he then lays his dogs on, and following on his snow-shoes soon overtakes and despatches his game. In the chase of the deer no guns are carried, but they are knocked down with clubs or an axe; but the moose being a large and powerful animal, defends himself by striking furiously with his fore feet; he is therefore brought to bay by the dogs, and the

hunters coming up shoot him from behind the trees with ball at their leisure.

I will now, having given a general sketch, proceed to describe our own chace, in which we were unusually successful.

I went for the purpose of joining it to the house of an acquaintance who lives at Brompton. We set off from his house the following morning into the woods, four in number, walking on snow-shoes with four dogs, and carrying our guns, provisions, and blankets. After hunting over several miles of ground without success, we sat down and took our snack about one p. m , after which we started again, determined to give up the search for moose and go in search of deer, which were far more abundant. We had not hunted half-an-hour before we came, quite unexpectedly, on a moose-yard, and in a little time discovered the track where three had started out of the yard. The dogs were laid on, and after a sharp run of twenty minutes brought one to bay in an immense thicket. He fought furiously against the dogs, but was despatched after receiving four balls; he proved to be a last year's calf, and stood about fourteen hands high. After skinning the animal and burying the four quarters in the snow, we set off for home, intending to return and pursue the other two in the morning. Accordingly, early next day myself and two men started, Mr. C. being obliged to go on business. We soon came on the track, after following which for about half-a-mile, we found they separated. We pursued one track, and about a mile further we came to where the animal had slept the preceding night, and a little distance further we dis-

covered the marks of his having started. The dogs were immediately laid on, and in about twenty minutes we had brought the second one to bay. We stood watching him for some time as he stood contending with the dogs, when he was dispatched by a single shot. I remained by it to skin and cut it up, which having done and buried it in the snow, I set off for home, a distance of better than five miles through the woods. The two men meantime followed in the track of the third, but another party of hunters having got on the track had killed it before they got up.

Thus ended my first, and I think my last moose hunt, for the pleasure of seeing a moose at bay does not compensate for the very severe labour which accompanies travelling such a distance on snow-shoes. It is certainly more profitable than fox-hunting, for you get an animal as large as a small ox, the beef of which is excellent.

I must beg to inform you that we have market for every kind of produce at our own doors, as well as shops, or as they are called here stores, in every village. Provisions of every description have been high this year, on account of the great influx of emigrants; grain of every description has risen to an enormous price from the failure of the crops. I have, of course, had everything to buy this year; but next year I shall raise everything I require, and have a good deal of overplus to sell into the bargain.

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